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Gehlen, G.V.
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AIR

Chief, Foreign Division M

30 October 1950

Chief of Station, Karlsruhe

ZIPPER - Operational

Special Connections, Personalities, No. 20, UTILITY

REF : WASH KARLA-0129 (NOT G.F.D.M., F.O.B.)

1. It should be borne in mind in reading the following that the writer has known UTILITY only as a politician and has had no experience in dealing with him in intelligence operations or organizational administration.

2. There is nothing about UTILITY to suggest that he is nearly 50. He has always reminded me of a precocious schoolboy politician, 16 or 17 years old, bright for his age and more daring than his fellows in imitating the manners of grown-ups, the kind of boy who tries his political wings as manager of athletic teams or as editor of high school papers, or as manipulator of elections for the student council. This essential boyishness, in view of the fact that UTILITY is actually 48, is an incongruous but important element in his character, sometimes charming, sometimes exasperating, sometimes a little pathetic. One is almost always conscious of it in dealing with him, for it expresses itself in countless habits and mannerisms. When UTILITY smokes a cigar, he always looks as though it were his first, and indulged in only in a brave effort to give an impression of adulthood. In performing his duties as host, particularly when celebrities and important personages are involved, UTILITY is all at ease but resolved to play the Hausherr. He never looks the part, and the act is unconvincing, however determined. Like the schoolboy politician, UTILITY is an inveterate self-salesman. He seldom says an unconsidered word, which is not to say that he doesn't utter many an ill-considered one. He is, indeed, a bad conversationalist. He delivers his canned briefings well and convincingly, but when he departs from the script, his discourse is troubled by countless "Ich moecht' anal sagen" and scorchings for the discreet term or expression. And when the conversation touches upon anything but business, he is inhibited by extensive ignorance. At the root of all this, very probably, is his size. UTILITY is a runt, and, even as runts go, a rather unimpressive one. As [] has put it, he suffers from a "runt complex," which is consistent with the simile of the schoolboy politician.

3. This is the background against which UTILITY's erratic, sometimes brilliant, sometimes disreputable behaviour must be examined. It is easy to

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assume that UTILITY has had his moments of memorable chagrin as a German Army officer. No one looks the part less than he, and it is inconceivable that he hasn't been uncomfortably conscious of this fact all his life. It probably explains his extraordinary vanity, touchiness on matters of honor and prestige, - and his ambitiousness. He must have worked very hard to get as far as he has, and, lacking physical stature and presence, if not actual strength, he undoubtedly survived by his wits, which are keen, and which would be really formidable in a more stable man, less inhibited by the heebie jeebies of the adolescent boy tortured by suppressed doubts as to whether he can make a go of it in the adult world but determined to buttress a good try with a bold front.

4. Obviously, he doesn't lack important assets. He has initiative, vision and a deal of native shrewdness. His accomplishment in creating ZIPPER is something no one can take away from him, and it is remembered and acknowledged even by his detractors. It took vision, initiative and a lot of nerve, not to mention a grasp of the essentials of organization and some diplomatic talent. But in the early stages of the post-war game, UTILITY had the advantage of dealing almost exclusively with military men, on the American as well as on the German side, and he is understandably more at home with military men than with civilians. More recently he has had to deal almost exclusively with civilians, or with military men in cahoots with civilians, so to speak, and it has been a tougher haul. Politically, he has had, probably for the first time in his life, to do his politicking without the protective rules of honor and convention which distinguish military from civilian politics, and socially he has had to mix with people with whom he shares no common ground of education or experience and who have a disconcerting habit of talking on subjects about which UTILITY knows no more than the subject headings.

5. Throughout this period, concentrated in the developments associated with the Verfassungsschutz and remilitarization, he has performed erratically. He has generally sized things up correctly in his moments of psychological equilibrium, and has made policy accordingly, but time and again he has been disconcerted and sidetracked by events which seemed to threaten his ambition or prick his vanity. At such times he has indulged in petulance, temper tantrums, petty intrigue, slander and deceit. His reaction to []'s emergence as UPTHRUST's military advisor was consistently petulant, colored by jealousy, resentment and frustration. It was climaxed by a disgraceful temper tantrum, touched off by the official announcement of []'s appointment and followed by a week's sulk in Switzerland. An example of deceit and sharp practice was his wangling of an appointment with McCLOY. The campaign of intrigue and slander against [] was, to put it mildly, an undignified spectacle. It hurt [] not at all, hurt UTILITY very much and contributed nothing to []'s eventual downfall.

6. This performance, as unpleasantly spectacular as it was, does not, however, represent the complete record of the case, and it shouldn't be exaggerated in assessing UTILITY's performance over the past year, although it shouldn't be glossed over, either. The most-impressive aspect of the

counter case is UTILITY's demonstrated resiliency. He is a tough little fellow, volatile in his reaction to punishment, but astounding in his powers of recuperation. After each of his emotional spasms and after each of his sometimes apparently crushing defeats, he has bounced back, with equilibrium restored, capable again of clear, objective thinking, and ready to go back into the ring. Even his repulsive performance in begging the American staff for help against [] was balanced in part by his success in getting to McCLOY by an end run. This play represented a kind of double cross of UTILITY's American staff, but at least it showed persistency and resourcefulness.

7. If one were to summarize by compounding a glossary of pertinent adjectives, the result would read somewhat as follows: able, ambitious, bright, calculating, clever, devious, emotional, energetic, honorable, imaginative, impulsive, industrious, insecure (in the psychological sense), intelligent (but not intellectual), proud, resourceful, touchy, vain, volatile.

8. It will be noted that the above glossary includes some contradictions. They simply exist in UTILITY's character, and are usually explicable by reference to the factor of vanity and psychic insecurity which sometimes impels UTILITY to behave in a manner contrary to the dictates of his better nature and which often results, during moments of equilibrium, in tortuous rationalization. It would seem, for instance, that the attributes of deviousness and honor were irreconcilable. UTILITY's honor and honesty have been the subject of much discussion and correspondence. Actually, it is the opinion of those who have worked closely with him over a period of time that he is essentially both honorable and honest. His vanity occasionally persuades him to lie to save face, often foolishly, sometimes even ridiculously, and his ambition sometimes impels him to employ devious means when others fail, but these are invariably courses of second choice, and adopted with the safeguards and modifications to be expected of a man who is, by tradition and personal preference, basically honorable. Both [] and I are satisfied that in his reporting of major developments UTILITY has consistently told, if not the whole truth, at least little but the truth, and that at no time has he been deliberately deceitful in a substantial degree or on a substantial matter. As to his not always telling the whole truth, it must be remembered that UTILITY considers himself to be the head of a German organization and that, as such, he feels privileged to make his own decision as to what his relationship with his American sponsors requires him to tell them. In other words, he feels under no obligation to act as our informant on German military politics, although he is perfectly aware that an open exchange of relevant information is essential to effective and harmonious operations and as much in his own interest as ours.

9. The fact that UTILITY has emerged victorious and stronger than ever from this summer's political rough and tumble might reasonably be expected to go to his head and make him a more difficult partner in the immediate future than he has been in the past. It will certainly increase his confidence and bolster his position with his own organization, which was not unaffected by some of the blows he took during the early part of the summer. But UTILITY

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is too intelligent to make it reasonable to expect the worst. If UTILITY has learned how strong he is, he will certainly not be blinded to the fact that a major and indispensable source of that strength is his American sponsorship and support. He may indulge his vanity here and there along the way, but as between UTILITY's vanity and his intelligence, the former wins a good many battles, but the latter wins the wars.

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